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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Information Radio-Television Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2424

Aug. 18, 1989



'HOG DAYS OF SUMMER' --
Looking like a cross
between a dwarf hippo
and a Shar-pei dog, this
Meishan boar has just been
released from USDA quarantine
and is now ready for action.
This boar, along with 139
other Chinese pigs, will
be used to crossbreed with
U.S. breeds to increase
litter size, while maintain-
ing the lean yield and
quality of U.S. pork. USDA
Contact: Margaret Webb
(301) 436-7179. (USDA Photo
by Larry Rana.)

NEW LAB TO STUDY CLIMATE CHANGES -- USDA has established a new lab in
Beltsville, Md., to study how global climate changes may adversely
affect crops. "The threat of global warming and increased ultraviolet
radiation, air pollution, drought and acid rain, taken individually or
together, could seriously impact agriculture, possibly causing crop
failures," says R. Dean Plowman, administrator of USDA's Agricultural
Research Service. The new lab at Beltsville will join other USDA labs
doing related climate-stress research at Raleigh, N.C., Gainesville,
Fla., and Phoenix, Ariz. Contact: Donald T. Krizek (301) 344-3143.

HALEY NAMED TO HEAD AMS -- Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter
has named Daniel D. Haley to head USDA's Agricultural Marketing
Service. Haley had been chief deputy director of the California
Department of Food and Agriculture since 1987. He has also held
several positions with the Western Growers Association in Irvine,
Calif. He received a bachelor's degree from Arizona State University,
Tempe, and a law degree from the Western State University College of
Law, San Diego.



NEW HEALTH FOOD? A Phoenix-based beef processor recently announced plans to market "Lite Beef." And, although Sun Land Beef Co. claims its product is unique, competitors, potential customers and USDA are skeptical. According to USDA, dozens of companies are distributing light beef products, which are becoming extremely popular because of consumers' growing health concerns. USDA Contact: Jim Greene (202) 382-0314.

OLD COWS; NEW TRICKS -- USDA scientists have taught their cows a new trick. To keep their heifers from eating the tasty, but toxic, tall larkspur, the scientists taught them not to eat the poisonous plants. And, the heifers remembered the lesson the next season. Tall larkspur may kill more than 2,000 cows a year in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming. The approach may also work with other problem plants like locoweed. USDA Contact: James Pfister (801) 752-2941.

RURAL ROADS & BRIDGES -- To help plan rural roads and bridges, USDA recently issued two publications that provide valuable info on how the Nation's rural roads and bridges are financed. The findings are based on a two-year study by USDA's Office of Transportation. To get copies of the new publications, "Rural Roads and Bridges: Federal and State Financing" and "Rural Roads and Bridges: A Dilemma for Local Officials," call (202) 653-6305. Contact: Larry Mark (202) 447-2186.

FARM WORKERS & WAGES UP -- There were 8 percent more people (3.80 million) working on the Nation's farms and ranches this year than last year, according to USDA statistics gathered the week of July 9 - 15. And hired workers were paid an average of \$5.23 per hour, up 33 cents from 1988. Self-employed farm operators account for 1.53 million of the 3.80 million. Contact: Tim Placke (202) 475-3228.

'FFA TODAY' NEEDS PSA'S -- "FFA Today," a new monthly video magazine, is getting ready to hit the airwaves next month. The show is designed to give people upbeat, exciting info on what's happening in agriculture and the FFA, says Carol Wimsby, vice president of Heartland Communications Corp. Wimsby says the premier show still has room for some Public Service Announcements. She'd also like story ideas. Wimsby says she's excited about the first show, which will air Sept. 23 or 24, because it will include interviews with Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter and ARS Deputy Administrator Waldemar Klassen. The show should be available to 40 percent of the country by December, she says. Contact: Carol Wimsby (913) 599-6000.

BEST MEAT BUYS -- Turkey, ground beef, pork shoulder, ground chuck and whole chicken are best meat buys, a recent USDA study found. The economy of a cut depends on the amount of cooked lean meat or the number of servings it provides, as well as the price per pound. Contact: Jerry Smith (301) 435-8617.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1650 -- What's a little rivalry between neighbors? It can be serious business when it comes to who has the best lawn! Maria Bynum has some lawn planting & maintenance tips that may give you the edge on the competition. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1162 -- Watering your lawn; buying lawn seed; multi-cultural youth camps; supermarket nutrition clubs; a dairy quiz. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE #1669 -- USDA news highlights; developing economies outlook; cattle videos; weed eaters; new export predictions. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1233 -- Rebuilding orange juice production; "ambersweet" -- a timely orange; waterbelly research; grass tetany discovery; nitrogen & ground water. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Wed., Sept. 6, weekly weather & crop update; horticultural product exports; Thurs., Sept. 7, fruit outlook; Tues., Sept. 12, U.S. crop production, Soviet grain outlook, world ag/supply & demand; Wed., Sept. 13, world ag production, world oilseed situation, world cotton situation.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

USDA TV NEWS SERVICE -- (Aug. 17, 19 & 21) Agriculture Update; USDA Economist Christian Foster on Soviet grain outlook; USDA Economist Sara Short on milk production; USDA World Board Chairman James Donald on the latest crop production estimates; USDA Economist Jim Schaub on cottonseed oil & triple-base; Sid Cousins of USDA's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service on boll weevil eradication; and TV Feature on "Honey Exports."

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30-7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
SATURDAY 10:30-11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D
MONDAY 8:30-9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

OFF MIKE

Hugh Robinson (KKOW Radio, Pittsburg, Kans.) tells me farmers there will be harvesting 85-90 bushel per acre wheat this year. He says soybeans and milo are planted and are looking very good. It's the "garden spot of the world," according to Hugh. He says, "Eat your hearts out, fellow farm broadcasters." Hugh says he's going to bring a busload of tourists to Washington next year and is looking for a book on little known facts about the city. If you have one, pass it on to Hugh. Hugh's dad worked at USDA for 45 years. Here's a little-known fact -- when his dad had to work, Hugh would roller skate in the hallways of the South Building. I'll bet that was quite a sight! Hugh asked me to guest host with him on his radio show the day before NAFB/Kansas City begins. I immediately said, "Yes!" It sounds like fun!

Lynn Ketelsen (Linder Farm Network, Wilmar, Minn.) just got off the phone with Gary Crawford. Gary fed him the audio from the Drought Aid Signing Ceremony at the White House. Lynn says he is looking forward to Kansas City. Well, so are the folks here at USDA Radio-TV!

Farm Broadcasters Letter

Radio and Television, Rm. 410-A
Office of Information, OGPA
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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This is the first time, in my memory anyway, that USDA Radio-TV will have an official exhibit. We're taking the exhibit to the Radio-TV News Directors Association convention in Kansas City in September. Then the exhibit will be shown at the "Trade Talk" portion of the NAFB annual convention in November. So, all of us here are looking forward to meeting with all of you and getting to know you better. Several of us will be arriving in time for Mark Vail's reception on Wednesday evening. Marci Hilt, who does our broadcast liaison, as well as edit this newsletter, is coordinating the USDA exhibit. She says she will have lots of grey hair (it's strawberry blonde right now) when it's all over! If you have any thoughts about how we can serve you better please let us know. Gary Crawford, Maria Bynum and yours truly make up the radio team. On the TV side we have Lynn Wyvill, Debbie Janifer and Patrick O'Leary. Please, pick up the phone and tell us or our chief, Vic Powell, what you want more or less of. (202) 447-4330. Vic will be back from vacation next week! Until then ...

Brenda Curtis-Heiken

BRENDA CURTIS-HEIKEN
Acting Chief, Radio and Television Division